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MANIFESTO OF PAU-BRASIL POETRY

OSWALD DE ANDRADE

Translated by Stella M. de Sá Rego

Poetry exists in the facts. The shacks of saffron and ochre in the green of the Favela, under cabralin blue, are aesthetic facts.

Carnival in Rio is the religious event of our race. Pau-Brasil. Wagner is submerged before the carnival lines of Botafogo. Barbarous and ours. The rich ethnic formation. Vegetal riches. Ore. Cuisine. Vatapá, gold and dance.

All the pioneering and commercial history of Brazil. The academic aspect, the side of citations, of well-known authors. Impressive. Rui Barbosa: a top hat in Senegambia. Transforming everything into riches. The richness of balls and of well-turned phrases. Negresses at the jockey club. Odalisques in Catumbi. Fancy talk.

The academic side. Misfortune of the first white brought over, politically dominating the wild wilderness. The alumnus. We can't help being erudite. Doctors of philosophy. Country of anonymous ills, of anonymous doctors. The Empire was like that. We made everything erudite. We forgot ingenuity.

Never the exportation of poetry. Poetry went hidden in the malicious vines of learning. In the lianas of academic nostalgia.

But there was an explosion in our knowledge. The men who knew it all inflated like overblown balloons. They burst.

The return to specialization. Philosophers making philosophy, critics criticism, housewives taking care of the kitchen.

Poetry for poets. The happiness of those who don't know and discover.

There was an inversion of everything, an invasion of everything: the theatre of ideas and the on-stage struggle between the moral and immoral. The thesis should be decided in a battle of sociologists, men of law, fat and gilded like Corpus Juris.

Agile theatre, child of the acrobat. Agile and illogical. Agile novel, born of invention. Agile poetry.

Pau-Brasil poetry. Agile and candid. Like a child.

A suggestion of Blaise Cendrars: you have the train loaded, ready to leave. A negro churns the crank of the turn-table beneath you. The slightest carelessness and you will leave in the opposite direction to your destination.

Down with officialdom, the cultivated exercise of life. Engineers instead of legal advisors, lost like the chinese in the genealogy of ideas.

Language without archaisms, without erudition. Natural and neologic. The millionaire-contribution of all the errors. The way we speak. The way we are.

There is no conflict in academic vocations. Only ceremonial robes. The futurists and the others.

A single struggle — the struggle for the way. Let's make the division: imported Poetry. And Pau-Brasil Poetry, for exportation.

There has been a phenomenon of aesthetic democratization in the five enlightened parts of the world. Naturalism was instituted. Copy. A picture of sheep that didn't really give wool was good for nothing. Interpretation, in the oral dictionary of the Schools of Fine Arts, meant reproduce exactly . . . Then came pyrogravure. Young ladies from every home became artists. The camera appeared. And with all the prerogatives of unkempt hair and the mysterious genius of the upturned eye — the photographic artist.

In music, the piano invaded the bare sitting-rooms, calendars on the wall. All the young ladies became pianists. Then came the barrel organ, the pianola. The player-piano. And the Slavic irony composed for the player-piano. Stravinski.

Statuary followed behind. The processions issued brand-new from the factories.

The only thing that wasn't invented was a machine to make verses — the Parnassian poet already existed.

So, the revolution only indicated that art returned to the elite. And the elite began taking it to pieces. Two stages: 1st) deformation through impressionism, fragmentation, voluntary chaos. From Cézanne and Mallarmé, Rodin and Debussy until today. 2nd) lyricism, the presentation in the temple, materials, constructive innocence.

Brazil *profiteur*. Brazil *doutor*. And the coincidence of the first Brazilian construction in the general movement of reconstruction. Pau-Brasil poetry.

As the age is miraculous, laws were born from the dynamic rotation of destructive factors.

Synthesis

Equilibrium

Automotive finish

Invention

Surprise

A new perspective

A new scale

Whatever natural force in this direction will be good. Pau-Brasil poetry.

The reaction against naturalistic detail — through *synthesis*; against romantic morbidity — through geometric *equilibrium* and technical *finish*; against copy, through *invention* and *surprise*.

A new perspective.

The other, Paolo Ucello's, led to the apogee of naturalism. It was an optical illusion. The distant objects didn't diminish. It was the law of appearance. Now is the moment of reaction against appearance. Reaction against copy. Replacing visual and naturalistic perspective with a perspective of another order: sentimental, intellectual, ironic, ingenuous.

A new scale:

The other, of a world proportioned and catalogued with letters in books, children in laps. Advertisements producing letters bigger than towers. And new forms of industry, of transportation, of aviation. Gas stations. Gas meters. Railways. Laboratories and technical workshops. Voices and tics of wires and waves and flashes. Stars made familiar through photographic negatives. The correspondent of physical surprise in art.

Reaction against the invader subject, unlike finality. The theatre of ideas was a monstrous arrangement. The novel of ideas, a mixture. History painting, an aberration. Eloquent sculpture, a meaningless horror.

Our age announces the return to *pure meaning*.

A picture is lines and colors. A statue is volumes under light.

Pau-Brasil Poetry is a Sunday dining room with birds singing in the condensed forest of cages, a thin fellow composing a waltz for flute and Mary Lou reading the newspaper. The present is all there in the newspaper.

No formula for the contemporary expression of the world. *See with open eyes*.

We have a dual and actual base — the forest and the school. The credulous and dualistic race and geometry, algebra and chemistry soon after the baby-bottle and anise tea. A mixture of «sleep little baby or the bogey-man will get you» and equations.

A vision to encompass the cylinders of mills, electric turbines, factories, questions of foreign exchange, without losing sight of the National Museum. Pau-Brasil.

Elevator-projectiles, sky-scraper cubes and solar indolence's wise flush. Prayer. Carnival. Intimate energy. The song-thrush. Hospitality, slightly sensual, affectionate. The yearning for shamans, and the military airfields. Pau-Brasil.

The labor of the futurist generation was cyclopean. To reset the Imperial watch of national literature.

This step realized, the problem is other. To be regional and pure in our time.

The state of innocence replacing the state of grace that can be an attitude of the spirit.

The counter-weight of native originality to neutralize academic conformity.

Reaction against all the indigestions of erudition. The best of our lyric tradition. The best of our modern demonstration.

Merely Brazilians of our time. The necessary of chemistry, mechanics, economy and ballistics. Everything assimilated. Without cultural meetings. Practical. Experimental. Poets. Without bookish reminiscences. Without supporting comparisons. Without ontology.

Barbarous, credulous, picturesque and tender. Readers of newspapers. Pau-Brasil. The forest and the school. The National Museum. Cuisine, ore and dance. Vegetation. Pau-Brasil.

Correio da Manhã, March 18, 1924